

Washington, D.C. - Representative Rob Wittman (VA-1), Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, supported the passage today of the Conference Report for the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This legislation, the final version of the bill that establishes the funding authorizations and priorities for the nation's military, passed the House of Representatives by a strong bipartisan vote of 315-107. During floor debate over the measure, Wittman delivered the following statement:

"In this city where partisan strife tends to reign supreme, it is truly refreshing to see folks able to work across the aisle and focus on a common goal, which is ensuring that the men and women of our all-volunteer force are provided with the highest caliber of resources, training, and authorities as they step into harm's way to complete their missions.

"Our nation is the greatest nation the world has ever known, precisely because our brave servicemen and women make up the finest military the world has ever known. But our military is certainly facing many difficult challenges, both here at home, where the Pentagon has endured 50% of the nation's deficit reduction, despite the fact that it only comprises 20% of the budget, and also abroad, where our troops continue to serve bravely in Afghanistan, and where geopolitical focus is beginning to shift to the Asia Pacific.

"These challenges have certainly been at the heart of efforts by the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee throughout the past year. Over the past six months, the O and I subcommittee convened a number of hearings and briefings on the training and development of the Afghan National Security Force. I consider this issue one of our nation's security imperatives, and we must continue to monitor this effort in the months to come.

"And since June of 2011, the subcommittee also conducted an extended study of the Navy's 30 Year Shipbuilding Plan, in order to better understand the effectiveness of this plan and its impact on the defense industrial base.

"These initiatives, and others like them, have been aimed at maximizing the successes of our military, increasing our capabilities for future success, and ensuring efficient and effective use of resources and funding. At the heart of all this, we must ensure that the looming defense cuts under sequestration are addressed. Our national security depends on us getting this right. This

Conference Report today echoes these goals of providing for our military, and I'd like to thank members and staff for their dedication to our men and women in uniform.

"Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen who selflessly serve this nation on a daily basis. Without their service, we would not be the great nation we are today, and their example inspires me on a daily basis."

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee, where he is Chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

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